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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) An audio output control device comprising:

digital audio signal reproduction means for reproducing digital audio signals recorded on a tape[[,]]; and

analog audio signal reproduction means for reproducing analog audio signals recorded on said ~~the~~ tape[[,]]; and

audio output switching means for switching between an output signal of said digital audio signal reproduction means and an output signal of said analog audio signal reproduction means[[,]]; and

a delay circuit provided between said analog audio signal reproduction means and said audio output switching means.

wherein, when ~~said the~~ tape is being driven at a normal playback speed, said audio output switching means is switched so that the output signal of said digital audio signal reproduction means is output, put out, and

wherein, when the tape is being driven at a certain speed exceeding the normal playback speed of said ~~the~~ tape, said audio output switching means is switched so that the output signal of said analog signal reproduction means is output, put out and

wherein a delay time of said delay circuit is controlled based on VTR tape speed information.

13. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 12, further comprising a microcomputer, wherein said microcomputer controls said audio output switching means.

14. (Previously Presented) The audio output control device of claim 12, wherein control of said audio output switching means is performed by a circuit structure other than a microcomputer.

15. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 12, wherein said audio output switching means performs switching by inputting output signals of said digital audio signal reproduction means and output signals of said analog audio signal reproduction means, mixing both of the output signals of said digital audio signal reproduction means and the output signals of said analog audio signal reproduction means~~them~~, and continuously and gradually changing the mixing ratio thereof.

16. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 12, wherein switching control of said audio output switching means from the output signal of said digital audio signal reproduction means to the output signal of said analog audio signal reproduction means is performed based on the VTR tape speed information.

17. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 12, wherein

switching control of said audio output switching means from the output signal of said digital audio signal reproduction means to the output signal of said analog audio signal reproduction means is performed based on digital audio signal reproduction error information.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 16, wherein said ~~the~~ VTR tape speed information is obtained from a time code reproduced from the tape or from a servo control circuit.

20. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 17, wherein said ~~the~~ VTR tape speed information is obtained from a time code reproduced from the tape or from a servo control circuit.

21. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim ~~18~~12, wherein said ~~the~~ VTR tape speed information is obtained from a time code reproduced from the tape or from a servo control circuit.

22. (Currently Amended) The audio output control device of claim 17, wherein said ~~the~~ digital audio signal reproduction error information is ~~that~~ the number of syncs per frame is being equal to or less than a predetermined value, or an existence of an error flag.

23. (New) The audio output control device of claim 12, wherein said audio output switching means is switched so that the output signal of said analog signal reproduction means is output so as to enable monitoring of audio signals during high-speed playback.